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Press Release

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Mentor, Inspirational Therapist Recognized for Work with Veterans

Clara Wise an occupational therapist from VA Loma Linda Healthcare System was presented a an award May 27 from San Bernardino County recognizing her as a community advocate and for her outstanding contributions to mental health.

Ms. Wise, received the accolades in front of more than 300 community mental health professionals, consumers and local elected officials during a banquet hosted by the San Bernardino County Department of Behavioral Health.

The county presented Wise with the “Behavioral Health Community Advocate Award” for embracing the recovery model and for actively helping others to become empowered, take control of their lives, develop goals, and reach their fullest potential.

“I get lots of recognition and affirmation from the Veterans,” Wise said. “I am here because of the Veterans. They are inspirational in their recovery process.”

“Clara has provided tremendous support in helping Veterans work with peers on their road to recovery,” said Kristen Martinez, of the San Bernardino County Department of Behavioral Health, as she read from the award citation. “She is a mentor and a true inspiration for all who have been blessed to have the opportunity to work with her.”

Wise, of Claremont, Calif., has served Veterans at the Loma Linda VA Medical Center for 19 years. She recently assisted in coordinating a training and subsequent graduation sponsored by the San Bernardino County Veterans Affairs. The two-week peer specialist training prepared 10 Veterans to serve as peer specialists and helped them in their own recovery journey. These Veterans can serve as volunteers or employees in programs such as the Vet to Vet program.

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